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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics
Washington, D. C.
February 1944

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SHIFTS IN THE FARM LABOR SITUATION, 1942-1943

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SHEPHERDS IN THE FARM LABOR SITUATION, 1942-1943 ^{1/}

In the 35 counties where periodic observations have been made since September 1942, the farmers found it less difficult to get their work done in 1943 than they had in 1942. Farm employers in these counties did not find farm labor so short nor wages so high as they had predicted they would be before the farming season began.

1. More experienced peak-season and year-round farm employees were at work in 1943 than their employers had thought would be available.
2. More urban youth and women were being used on farms than in 1942, and they were used with more confidence by the farmers.
3. Farmers made more use of their own family labor than in 1942.

During 1942 farm employers saw the demand for farm production go up, and saw their labor supply greatly depleted. This two-way strain lay behind the pessimism many of the farmers expressed in the fall of 1942 about the prospects for the farm labor situation.

Between the fall of 1942 and the fall of 1943 the farm labor situation in these counties had been eased up by the greater readiness with which farm deferments had been made, the increase of local control over the movement of farm workers, the importation of farm laborers from Mexico and the West Indies, the transference of native workers from one area to another within the country, the Nation-wide recruitment program of emergency volunteers, the farmers' greater use of their own family labor, and their increased willingness to use inexperienced workers.

As some farm laborers saw it, many of the programs to relieve the farm labor shortage had decreased the advantages they held in a dwindling labor market. Rising farm wages nonetheless made farm work more attractive than it would

1/ The materials for this statement were summarized by Arthur W. Miller and U. T. Miller Summers from a half-dozen reports from each of the 35 counties representative of the major farming areas. These county reports were made by the field staff of the Division of Farm Population and Rural Welfare on the basis of their 6 field observations carried on in these counties during the past 16 months. Four of the 6 field observations in these counties -- 2 in the last quarter of 1942, 1 in the summer of 1943, and the other in the fall of 1943 -- were specifically concerned with the farm labor situation. In many instances the interviewer talked to the same farmers on each trip, thereby securing particular details in each county were being collected by the field staff over a period of time.

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otherwise have been to many farm and non-farm low-income people and to emergency volunteer workers. The high urban cost of living together with rising farm wages and some assurances as to the permanency of the farm job have caused some defense workers to return to farm work. Relatively good prices for farm products and the relative scarcity of farm laborers have caused the farm employers to pay higher wages this past year and to do more of their own work.

I. EXPERIENCED FARM WORKERS STILL ON THE JOB

Fewer farm workers left the sample counties for the armed forces and for industry in 1943 than in 1942. The position of the farm worker in 1943 was characterized by less freedom of mobility, and at the same time some growing independence because of rising farm wages and new concessions from employers.

A. More Liberal Farm Deferment Policy

In 1942 when the proposal for more farm deferments was brought up, many farm operators in these counties said that they thought it would do little good, for most of the best workers had already been taken, and that many of those left behind would be pressured by the community into volunteering for the armed forces.

The situation has worked out quite differently. Here and there is a draft board that has made few or no deferments, but in general the number of deferments granted in farm communities has been large enough to make a substantial difference in the local farm work situation, and comparatively few farm boys have volunteered after having been deferred.

The deferment policy has been a special relief to large and family-sized farmers whose enterprises require skilled year-round workers. Dairymen felt much better about the labor situation in 1943 than they thought they would the year before. Deferments have been especially appreciated in the highly mechanized farming areas where machinery-wise workers are so essential to production.

The administrative ruling which reduced the number of war units required for deferment, and increased the war-unit value of such crops as cotton and tobacco, made it possible for many more workers to qualify for deferment. For example, before the new ruling went into effect early in 1943, almost no farm deferments had been granted in a Piedmont tobacco county; since then, there have been hundreds of deferments in this county, with few requests turned down, and but two volunteers from among the deferrees.

Among farmers themselves there has been little pressure which would force a farm boy to "fight" rather than stay on the farm. Farmers have usually been anxious that the deferrees be contented at home, and are more likely to praise

than censure their choice. Such reproach as there has been has usually come from non-farm groups who may be resentful where the effort to fill draft quotas in the face of heavy farm deferments had caused their own men to be taken earlier than if the farm workers had not been deferred.

With the increased opportunities for deferment on the farm and the beginning of the father-draft, some workers in local lower-paid industries, such as cotton mills, have gone back to farming; others in construction work have not looked for new jobs as present jobs ended, and so returned to the home farm.

B. Increased Local Control of Agricultural Workers

The drain of farm workers into year-round industry has virtually stopped in all the sample counties except two. Both of these are in subsistence farming areas where most farmers do not have enough war units to qualify for deferment, and one of the two suffered from severe flood and drought during the first half of 1943. The necessity of securing a certificate of availability from local officials in order to leave farm work has been a factor in causing some farm workers who might otherwise have gone into industry or to a distant farming area in the last year to remain on local farms. After the fall harvest many workers were released to work in industry for a specified length of time.

The type of cooperation a war board may work out with local farm operators is shown in a Michigan county where in spite of many applications, no releases are given until after the bean harvest. Then releases for the winter months were given readily only to farm operators; farm laborers were encouraged to find year-round agricultural employment.

Building contractors and managers of local industries have usually cooperated with local war boards in not hiring agricultural workers, or in releasing them at the time promised. Hundreds of seasonal farm workers applied for work in the construction of a two-million-dollar war prisoners' camp in a Texas farm county; none was accepted. Sawmill operators in a Mississippi county who had hired Negro workers during the summer slack-work time, were careful to release them for cotton picking. When a war plant in a Pennsylvania county began to slacken production, small farm operators and farm laborers are reported to have been released first.

C. Rising Farm Wages

Even though farm wages this past year did not increase in most counties as much as the farmers had earlier thought they would, wages did rise in all but one of the counties studied. And the rising wage has been an important factor in maintaining the traditional farm labor supply and in making farm work attractive to emergency volunteers. As relatively good farm prices have encouraged farm owners and operators to stay in business in spite of some hardships, increased farm wages have helped to keep up the supply of farm workers, especially the women and children of lower-income families who already have a background of farm work.

From practically all of the South's cotton counties studied came the prediction a few weeks ahead of the 1943 harvest that in the approaching peak season the Negro women who had relatives in war industries or who were receiving dependency allotments from relatives in the armed forces would likely not turn out as usual for harvest work. The fear proved to be premature, for very few women in these counties who had worked in other years failed to turn out. Picking cotton at \$1.50 and \$2.00 a hundred this year proved quite attractive to these women who a couple of years back were picking it for 40 cents to \$1.00 per hundred.

Similarly, in the northeastern truck-farming areas, it was expected that many of the lower-income Polish and Italian women who have always helped in the vegetable harvest, would not work. In the three counties studied where this source of help has been available over the years, more women than usual worked this past year. Here, too, higher wages were an important factor, as were they also in the return of migrant Mexicans to two cotton counties in central Texas, and the return of regular migrant workers to the wheat fields of the counties studied in the high plains from the Texas Panhandle to the Dakotas.

In addition to higher wages, farm employers in practically all counties studied reported that they have been more inclined than ever before to make other concessions to get and keep workers. In the South many landless families have been permitted to shift from farm labor status to that of share-cropper or tenant. Landowners are making more improvements in their tenant houses than usual. In other sections, too, farm employers stated that they had found that giving a farm laborer some definite stake in the crop was a good way to encourage him to remain throughout the season. In the Southwest at cotton picking time this past fall some employing farmers furnished milk cows, ice water, and watermelons to migrant Mexicans for the first time.

Many employers reported that they were a little more inclined to overlook tardiness, to be less strict about the quality of the work.

D. Recruitment Efforts to Secure Low-Income Farm Workers

In many areas the chief work of the local Farm Labor Assistants employed by the Extension Service this year was to recruit extensively and intensively from the ranks of the local traditional farm labor groups. Before they attempted to tap the unusual sources of farm labor, such as urban men and youth, they tried to make available all possible workers from the groups the farm operators were accustomed to use.

Negro merchants and teachers were used effectively as recruiters of lower-income workers in some parts of the South. One Negro teacher in a Texas county explained his part in a special recruitment program at cotton hoeing time:

"When recruiting the laborers, I went to the homes between 7:00 and 10:00 o'clock in the evening to find who would be available for work the next day. Then from 5:00 to 8:00 o'clock in the morning I would make the rounds again, and, if necessary, awaken the families to urge them to work. Sometimes when I could not get the workers assembled in time for the trucks, I would take them to the fields in my car."

In an Alabama farm trade center, 1,000 mimeographed circulars asking for people to sign up for farm work were distributed in the Negro sections of town. A house-to-house canvass was made in a town in Piedmont South Carolina by farm labor recruiters in those sections of town occupied by the textile mill workers and by the Negroes.

Another example of an intensive campaign directed toward getting on the usual farm labor group was in a New York County where Italian women and other family members have been used. In the belief that financial motivation would not suffice, recruitment plans centered on patriotism. Local Italian leaders were carefully organized to help make the appeal. Community photographers took pictures of the Italian farmers helping to win the war by harvesting the crops. Extensive use was made of the radio.

II. FARM VOLUNTEERS

A national program for the recruitment of farm volunteers in 1943 replaced the sporadic efforts of 1942. In 1942 many farmers expressed the belief that if experienced farm workers were not available, a lot of farm work would not be done at all.

The past year has seen rather general acceptance of the fact that, when necessary, much farm work may be done by inexperienced help. Except for the counties where imported workers and other special groups were brought in, there was wide use in 1943 of the volunteer group in the farming area. They had been found to be most useful the past season. In some areas the volunteer workers were not used at all in 1942, some use was made of them in 1943.

A. Victory Farm Volunteers

With the systematization of the Victory Farm Volunteer work, many more non-farm boys and girls were recruited for farm work in 1943 than in 1942 -- largely in the Northeastern and Middle Atlantic States, certain sections of the North Central, Northern Illinois States, and the Pacific Coast. For the most part the youth were used in the jobs at which inexperienced workers were known to be most efficient -- fruit and nut gathering, potato harvesting, tomato picking, grain stacking, corn-detasseling.

In some counties recruited urban youths worked at farm jobs this past year that had never before been done by non-farm youth. Many of the farmers who have used urban young people are beginning to trust them at more responsible jobs, and more youth were hired for all-season jobs in 1943 than in 1942. Fully-size farmers who have never hired much labor seem to be the most willing to take a town boy to help with the chores, learn to look after livestock, and maybe run a tractor. Some Virginia farmers, who have always believed that inexperienced workers could not be used in tobacco harvest, found the sons of city cotton mill workers quite satisfactory for some of the processes.

B. Women's Land Army

The Women's Land Army has done a pioneering job in recruiting non-farm women for farm work. The county labor assistants have been especially effective in recruiting women from among the lower-income families everywhere, and from upper-income families in many of the areas where farm labor needs have been most acute. Though because of the regular home and community activities of upper-status women and of the few employment opportunities available to them, it has been difficult to recruit them in large numbers. The non-farm women doing farm work have usually been used for much the same peak season jobs as volunteer youth farm workers -- often to help supervise them.

The placement of women in year-round farm work involves the overcoming of cultural barriers. A New Hampshire farmer, for example, put it this way: "It just wouldn't be the same -- pitching hay beside a woman, or lifting a wagon box with a woman at the other end." Nonetheless, some few women have been placed on dairy farms in the counties studied in New England and New Jersey, and now and then one has been used as a sheep herder in the Northwest. Said a New England dairy farmer of his woman worker: "To tell you the truth, I didn't much want to use her, but she's doing her work fine, better than any man I could hope to hire around here now."

In no one of the 35 counties studied have town women been employed to take over the household work of farm families in order to relieve the more experienced farm women for field work.

C. Employed Townspeople

Although urban youth and women, particularly from the lower-income families, were used on farms more in 1943 than in 1942 in the 35 counties studied, it is doubtful whether employed townspeople in these counties did as much farm work in 1943 as in 1942.*

In 5 out of the 35 farm counties, the use of employed townspeople was an important part of the 1943 Farm Labor Program. One of these was Woodhull, Minnesota, home of the Woodhull Plan which won National attention in 1942. In 2 Northern Plains counties, "Twilight Armies" went out in the evenings to work until dark. In many as 200 in a Massachusetts county studied would go out and work on farms over the week end. The fifth was the New York county

*Employed townspeople in some instances have worked on farms over the week end, during temporary seasons, under urban employment programs, and on the farm during the winter or before or after the regular work season.

where, as mentioned above, a program was worked out to get the Italian to the fields again this past harvest. As that program progressed, with the publicity given to the labor needs of the farmers and the emphasis on patriotic duty, townspeople not of the traditional farm labor group began to be interested. Between 600 and 700 employed townspeople worked on farms at vacations and on week ends during the summer. In 5 other sample counties a few employed townspeople worked on farms.

Three counties which used employed townspeople in 1942 decided not to use them this year. In a valley county in California where large numbers of employed townspeople were used on farms during the peak harvest season of 1942, the farmers arranged in 1943 for the use of Mexican Nationals to supplement the local supply of regular harvest workers, and so asked the merchants not to try to do farm work, but to keep their stores open one night a week so their workers wouldn't have to take time off during the day to make their purchases. In sugar beet counties in Colorado and Montana Mexican Nationals were also brought in this past year, and employed townspeople did not need to do farm work as they had the year before. In three other counties, two in the South and one in Missouri, tentative plans were made for the use of employed townspeople at harvest time, but they were not needed.

III. FULLER UTILIZATION OF FARM FAMILY LABOR

In addition to the extra work of farm laborers and volunteer workers in 1943, farm owners and operators and their families did more work than ever before.

A. Farmers Who Do All Their Own Work

The smaller and subsistence farmers whose family labor has been traditional under-used made fuller use of their time in 1943. Many of them increased production on their own farms by adding a cow or two or three more pigs and more chickens. Others did more work on neighboring farms, or followed the harvests into other States. A large number of the migrant hands and combine operators in the Northern Plains wheat harvest this past season were small farmers who had not done migratory farm work before. Kentuckians from subsistence hill farms, whose transportation costs had been paid by the Government, were found as year-round hands in some of the counties studied in the States above the Ohio River, and as seasonal hands for the vegetable harvest in the sample county in New York.

B. Farmers Who Hire Additional Labor

By using additional family labor, by lengthening the work week, extending the harvest periods, and swapping work with their neighbors, many farmers last year were able to get along with less hired labor than usual. This was especially true of medium-sized dairy and general farmers in the counties studied in the Northeast, and of the smaller mechanized farmers in the Middle West and Northern Plains counties. It was also true of many family-size farmers in the sample counties of the mid-South and Southeast.

Other farmers in this group were doing more work by necessity rather than choice because of the disadvantage the smaller farm employers have in hiring workers in competition with larger employers. These were the farmers who in the past usually hired a worker or two now and then from the locally available surplus labor supply. Among such operators are the smaller vegetable producers on both the East and West Coasts, the smaller ranchers in the Northwest, sugar beet growers in Colorado, and cotton farmers in the South. Some small white operators of irrigated farms in a county in Colorado, for example, did sugar beet work this past season for the first time, and most of the other sugar beet growers were careful to do practically all of their nonbeet work to save the Mexican workers for the beets.

C. Employers Who Are Largely Supervisors of Labor

Some farmers who have traditionally done little of their own work did more farm work than usual this past year. "I went out this spring and worked in the fields along with the hired hands," said a deep-south cotton planter. Such programs as the California "owners-in-overalls" program have been significant.

When a wage hand became a sharecropper or renter, his first responsibility was to his own crop, and so his landowner and family often took over the farm chores he had done as well as the cultivation of a part or all of the crop heretofore worked by the wagehand.

While some farmers who did all or most of their own work lengthened their harvest periods this past year, many of the operators of large commercial farms became anxious to shorten their harvest periods to reduce the risk of losing any portion of a profitable crop, and to do so wanted workers more promptly than usual, and also frequently worked more themselves. On other farms a shift from hand-cultivated crops to machine-cultivated crops and livestock added dignity to the additional labor done by the operator and his family.

For certain jobs workers were sometimes scarce even though for other jobs in the same areas they were relatively plentiful. Shepherding in a Northwest county was one of these; cotton-hoeing in a mechanized cotton county in Texas was another. In this Texas county, Mexican migrant workers turned up for cotton-picking, but almost none for cotton-hoeing. Sometimes farm employers have found themselves needing to do the work the migrant Mexicans and other regular farm workers least wanted to do.

Employers of farm labor complained often of the concessions they were having to make to get and keep experienced workers, but they were nonetheless proud of their production achievement, and took some satisfaction in finding ways to get along with fewer workers.

Farm Work and Children

The wives and children of the smaller and subsistence farmers in the sample counties did as much or more field work than usual, plus extra canning, gardening, and often more milking and churning chickens. The irregular school attendance of the children of some of these families has become very pronounced as the farm work done by them has increased.

Where the more prosperous farmers with a tradition of work were spending long hours in the field or at the barn, their wives and children were doing more work too, though usually they take over such chores as more of the milking, gardening, and tractor driving, rather than the more manual types of field work.

Because of the growing scarcity of domestic servants, women of the upper status groups in the South did more housework than before. Some women, however, and some did farm work, usually tractor or truck driving, while others did the traditional stoop work of picking cotton, milking, or churning. There are a few instances of ordinary field work being done for the first time by women of this group, as the Texas wives who hoed cotton last spring, or others who worked at tobacco "sawing time" in the Virginia Piedmont. One landowner's wife explained that she worked in the tobacco for the first time this past year in order to be certain that the tenants' wives continued to work.

IV. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE WARTIME LABOR ADJUSTMENTS OF FARMERS

If he is presented with a range of alternatives in meeting his farm needs the farmer usually gravitates to the one which requires least change from his pre-war living and working conditions. That is why the farm deferment policy has been so popular. It has enabled many farmers in the South to meet their labor needs with slight adjustments. Also in some parts of the South there were a labor surplus before the war, and other factors, with little or no change, have farm managers and owners have not yet needed to do much additional work, and are not interested in the recruitment of farm workers from among the lower-status youth, women, or employed townpeople.

Among the 35 counties studied, wages rose most last year, about 100 percent, in the one where the farm deferments were granted; the only county which showed no rise in wages was one with a policy of liberal farm deferment.

In most areas of the country some adjustments other than the farm deferment program and the paying of high wages have been necessary. Single men and other conditions and traditional practices, which have been common in the South, if the local labor situation is different, will be different. The following are typical:

In a New Hampshire county farmers stated definitely that they preferred local non-farm youth for work at peak seasons to imported workers of strange nationality groups to whom they had to guarantee 75 percent employment, and they did not want local townspeople whom they said were harder to recruit and in poorer condition. They liked to get the youth through their local schools, and found them more readily available on a special school holiday than during the summer vacation.

In a New York vegetable and dairy county, successful use was made of urban youths, employed townspeople, and local Italian women, but the farmers also recruited from among imported southern Negroes and West Indians, enough of them so they would not be dependent upon local non-farm people and so their own womenfolk could resume their regular housework.

Farmers in a Kansas Plains wheat county were disappointed when a group of migrant harvest hands from Oklahoma and Missouri failed to show up several days before the harvest began as in other years; but they paid them the high wages they were asking when they arrived on time to get the work done. Town girls sometimes drove grain trucks, and neighboring farmers whose crops had been hailed out, helped with their

farm employers in a Pacific Coast county were obviously relieved when with the importation of 2,275 Mexican Nationals, they could feel less dependent on the "okies" and dispense with the use of large numbers of employed townspeople, women, and youth whom they used extensively as a last resort the year before. It was pointed out that "the 35-to-40-a-day peach picker" is often waiting on the sidelines while the Mexican National is doing the same work for \$7 a day. The "okies" were disturbed, some of them talked about suing the Government because they were often left with the irregular jobs offered by the smaller farmers.

In a New Jersey vegetable county where Negro migrants from the South were brought in in 1942, and in addition a large number of Jamaicans and Bahamians in 1943, no organized effort was made to recruit local non-farm people for farm work. The only unusual local farm labor used were a few Boy Scouts who bicycled out to farms from their homes in town.

Sugar beet growers in an irrigated valley county in Colorado preferred to employ lower-status local youths rather than burden themselves with the regular employment of an additional number of Mexican Nationals available for use in that county.

Italian prisoners of war failed to replace the local Negro labor in an Arkansas county as anticipated. The Italian workers were said to be less reliable, and the local relief and pride of the local group was voiced by a Negro girl and was

was interviewed while unloading cotton. When asked, "How are the Italian prisoners working out?" he stopped shoveling, grinned, and said, "Well, ah hears they's not so good at pickin' cotton."

Learning that the Mexican migrants would not return in usual numbers to pick cotton this past season, the farmers in two Texas counties last spring and summer worked to get war prison camps located near them. When the Mexican migrants returned in their accustomed numbers, the farmers in the county with a camp under construction petitioned that it not be completed, while the farmers in the other area were relieved that their efforts had not been successful. Some farmers in the first area would be much more ready to help returning soldiers find jobs than those men now in war industries who left the county when the farmers needed them.

In an Ozark subsistence farming county, farmers customarily made full use of their family labor supply before hiring help. Women who have always done a good deal of field work did a little more this year. The home-construction of buck-rakes and hay stackers was promoted by the county agent.

Vegetable farmers in a Florida county used Bahamian labor, but stated that if they could get enough of it they preferred domestic Negro labor, "because it is easier to 'handle' and no 'Government bookkeeping' is attached to it." So far from having to use even more Bahamians, local Negro women in larger numbers than ever before worked in the beans and tomatoes this year, and many farmers built new houses to attract harvest labor. They were especially glad they hadn't had to use any Bahamians because, as one man put it, "They think they are just as good as white, we couldn't get along with them, and they'd ruin our regular workers."

In a Virginia tobacco county, an increased number of families "swapped help" -- a practice already well established there -- for supplemental farm labor was limited largely to appeals to the county's 4-H's, many of whom were experienced farm workers. Above all the farmers said they didn't want "inexperienced" labor in the tobacco crop, though a few hard-pressed farmers did make successful use of older town boys. Some convict labor worked in the corn and hay crops.

North Dakota farmers said they would rather see their crops rot than to see their women work in the fields. They formed additional threshing rings among themselves, used the available migrant workers, and then filled an empty crop, grain and livestock loss with the help of their

In a tight labor situation, the unusual labor source, such as the young women, the employed townswomen, offer a potentially large source of labor for the less skilled post-harvest jobs. In most of the upper half of the country, it has been demonstrated that inexperienced volunteers can be productive if their recruitment and work is well organized, and some farmers in New England and the Middle West stated that they preferred them to experienced workers from outside the region. Yet for many other farmers their use represents a wide departure from their usual ways of doing things. Often they use them only as the last resort, and even where emergency volunteer workers have saved the farmers from crop losses, the farmers say not feel secure in planning ahead for another year on the basis of these volunteer workers.

The idea of doing farm work is new to most middle-status and upper-status non-farm people. They are not accustomed to thinking of themselves as manual laborers, much less as hired farm workers. Consequently, they are slower than others to volunteer. The labor assistant in a town in the heart of the Iowa corn belt noted that the local youth who signed up with the VFW program were hard to get in touch with because most of them were from homes without telephones. The failure to recruit effectively in the middle- and upper-class groups means that this source of potential farm labor remains largely untapped in most areas of the country.

Here are some of the things the recruiters of unusual local labor have learned in the 35 counties studied:

- A. Recruit workers well ahead of the time they will be needed. Farmers, while preferring not to, will use volunteers inexperienced in farm work. Many who recruited this past year (despite the lack of faith and sometimes actual scoffing of the farmers) later found the farmers glad when harvest time came to make use of these volunteer workers. In four out of five counties studied in the Northeast, more people volunteered and were used than had been reported earlier in the season by either the farmers or the agency people.
- B. Cooperate with local community leaders in the recruitment and placement of volunteer workers. A recruitment program utilizing local leaders from each community assures to place workers in the hands of workers just when needed, and place it primarily in the hands of those who can make concrete plans for their use. There is some evidence that the recruitment of the non-farm youths and employed townswomen, farmers prefer to work through their own local community leaders.

- C. Use volunteers' own leaders as supervisors. Upper-status emergency volunteer farm workers have been used most successfully when their recruitment and supervision has been worked out through teachers, scout masters, athletic coaches, camp counsellors, and other people with status in their own community. In some of the counties studied it was noted that although the youths of the local upper-status groups seldom volunteered, upper-status youths from distant non-farm communities would come into these areas under the supervision of their own teacher or youth leader. The point is, the imported upper-status youths were recruited for, and supervised in, their emergency farm work in ways that maintained their status while at work away from home as well as within their home community.
- D. Be alert to treatment volunteers expect on the job. Volunteers do not like to work where they are treated like hired workers. They usually prefer to work where the farm operators work along with them. Said one townspeople who worked in 1942 and did not in 1943: "Before I go out and work on another farm, I want to know what the farm owner himself is doing."

In a western sugar beet county at harvest time last year, high school students flocked to some farms in preference to others. The determining factor was the treatment accorded them the year before. They avoided the farms where they had been treated most like hired workers.

One farmer in a Texas county, who was assigned 12 or 20 boys with paper routes and so needed to be back in town at a specified time, agreed to meet their schedule and to transport them back and forth. He and his two sons directed the boys by working along with them. The boys were taken back to town in time to deliver their papers, with the statement from the operator that he wanted the same boys again. Another operator put his hired man as boss over his crew with instructions to see that they worked. The boys did little work and the operator, very much dissatisfied, declared that he wanted nothing else to do with "town labor."

From practically all of the sample counties where non-farm youths and employed townspeople did farm work came reports of incidents which demonstrated that the emergency workers expected treatment from the employer clearly different from that commonly accorded low-status hired farm workers. Many concrete cases of special consideration were reported: The town boys in a Texas county were given 30 minutes in mid-afternoon to swim in a nearby creek; high school students in a Colorado county were given an ice-cream party at the home of the employer at the end of the week. Where one or two or three worked for a farmer, they were often treated about as members of the family. Nearly everywhere employers and supervisors found it helpful to deal with them as unseasoned workers who were at the job because they were especially needed.

4. recognize local values in setting up work crews. Where groups of markedly different status are working in the same crops, it has often been found preferable to use them in different fields, or in different parts of the same field. In the New York county studied some friction arose when city parents objected to their children working along with Jamaicans, Bahamians, and southern Negroes. It was found in Colorado that the Mexicans and local white youths did best at sugar beet work when working in separate crews. Within their own ethnic groups, the youths also worked best when they were allowed to form their own teams, so that boys who were congenial and of more nearly equal ability were working together.

